



September 14, 2017

The Honorable John Thune  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science and  
Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science and  
Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson,

With reports suggesting that a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) extension is inevitable, we are writing to urge that you make that extension at least six months in length, so as not to distract from the important progress being made on NextGen and needed airport projects.

There is a lack of consensus in the aviation community for Title II of H.R. 2997, the 21st Century AIRR Act, which seeks to effectively hand over control of our nation's air traffic system to the airlines and special interests. The entire general aviation community, along with small airports, mayors, business leaders, conservative groups like the American Conservative Union Foundation, consumer groups and countless others across the country are opposed to this so-called privatization of our nation's air traffic control system. Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office has reported that H.R. 2997 would add nearly \$100 billion to our deficit.

We believe that progress on modernization should continue by implementing targeted solutions to identified challenges and strongly support striking Title II of H.R. 2997, to allow completion of comprehensive, bipartisan, long-term FAA reauthorization. Removing Title II would ensure consensus and allow for our aviation system to continue to serve the traveling public and the aviation industry.

The skies over the U.S. are a national asset, and general aviation is committed to ensuring that the future funding and subsequent design of the national air transportation system will benefit all Americans. There are only around 500 cities in the U.S. that have any scheduled airline service, but there are over 5,000 small towns with airports that provide access to general aviation, including business aviation. Access to airports and the nation's airspace creates jobs, generates economic activity, and helps make America's aviation system work for all Americans. In fact, general aviation supports more than a million jobs and generates more than \$200 billion in economic activity each year. Aviation plays an important role in the economic development of communities large and small throughout the U.S. and we should not jeopardize that because big airlines are seeking to control our aviation system.

As a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report concluded, our air traffic modernization program is on schedule. We support this modernization effort and oppose handing over control of our nation's air traffic system to special interests with no Congressional oversight.

Again, we urge you to move away from this divisive air traffic control proposal, which is fraught with risks and unintended consequences, including national security concerns, and work towards passing a bipartisan, consensus driven FAA Reauthorization legislation so we can move our country forward.

Sincerely,



Mark Baker  
AOPA



Jack Pelton  
EAA



Pete Bunce  
GAMA



Matt Zuccaro  
HAI



Marty Hiller  
NATA



Ed Bolen  
NBAA